

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. Claims 1 – 12 are allowed

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art of record does not teach or suggest, in combination with all of the claimed elements, a switching device comprising a frame, a first connector and a second connector, means for connecting the first and the second connector electrically to one another, wherein the first connector comprises a hole formed in a portion of the first connector located inside the frame and configured to conduct an electric current of the current circuit in a closed state of the switching device, the hole being located and dimensioned such that a substantial portion of the first part of the gas flow will flow through the hole.

2. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marina Fishman whose telephone number is (571)272-1991. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30 - 4:00 M-T.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Renee S. Luebke can be reached on 571-272-2009. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2833

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Marina Fishman/
Examiner, Art Unit 2833
January 6, 2010

/renee s luebke/
Renee Luebke
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